

all I've seen since eighteen hours ago (is green eyes and freckles and your smile) by stardustupinlights

Series: you and me would be a big conversation [1]

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Summary:

This A+ list American singer that recently came out with a new album has been seen anonymously frequenting one particular location of a popular coffee chain in a large east coast city. Sources say it's not because of the coffee, but that he seems interested in the staff. Has this heart-breaker not

learned his lessons about meet-cutes? Just ask his exes how his last one turned out.

Also known as: I met someone who let me indulge in my Taylor Swift obsession and this happened. Do not take this seriously but enjoy the fluff.

Relationships: Apollo/Percy Jackson, Percy Jackson & Piper McLean, Thalia Grace & Percy Jackson

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1. Chapter 1

Author's Note:

yeah well.

this is a thing :)

Percy has nothing in particular against pop music—in fact, though he'll deny it, he loves it—but sometimes he thinks his brain is going to blow up from all the information Piper dumps on him whenever something related to it goes down.

"I can't *believe* how revealing this album is," Piper whines, leaning next to the cashier. She's lucky business is slow today and Percy's manager likes her too much to blow her off. "Percy, have you heard Style yet? Tell me you have. His ex is *literally* a model he seriously doesn't give a single fuck—"

"Piper," Percy begs, leaning his elbows on the counter and burying his face in his hands. "I don't care. I really don't. Please stop, I don't know who half of these people are."

Piper gasps. "Yes you do! I made sure you learned."

"I'm going to kill you and take you out with the trash," Percy threatens, lifting his head to glare at her, but Piper just throws her head back and laughs. "I mean it."

"But then you'd be bored," Piper points out, and Percy considers getting noise-cancelling earbuds. She'd probably find a way around that, though. "You love me."

"I love you," Percy agrees. "When you're quiet. Don't you have studying to do?"

"I am," Piper claims, even though she's been talking his ears off for the last two hours. "I'm memorizing Apollo's new album."

Percy rolls his eyes so hard it actually hurts. “Can you do that quietly?”

“You’re so grumpy lately,” Piper hums, throwing Percy an unimpressed look. “You need to get laid.”

“Oh my god,” Percy stares incredulously at her. “You’re the one that’s been single for five years—”

“I’m the one who fucked your ex—”

Percy does love Piper, in fact, so he laughs, unable to resist, because this back-and-forth is too much fun and actually keeps him going during slow shifts. “Are you actually gonna have a drink yet, or will you keep flexing on me and talking my ears off?”

“Just a brownie and a mocha,” Piper shrugs, pulling a twenty out of her back pocket. “You can take the rest as a tip, babe. I’m sure you’re dying for one inside you anyways—”

“I’m going to kill you,” Percy snorts, unable to actually make it sound like he means it as he rings her up. “Can you take out the trash for me instead?”

“I’m not strong enough to pick you up,” Piper blinks at him, and Percy shoots her a Look. Piper sighs. “I’m still not taking out the trash.”

“Whatever, I just want you off my face,” Percy says, not meaning it, and Piper knows it but plays along, heading back to her workspace at a table next to the window. Percy enjoys the blessed silence for around ten seconds before Piper remembers that he silenced the shop’s speakers and stands up to turn them back on, reminding him of the newest pop nightmare. “Fuck you.”

Piper leans back against her chair, flips him off, and actually sets out to study, taking a huge bite out of her brownie. How delightful. He could go annoy Hazel in the back, since she’s organizing the supply closet and shit, but he doesn’t feel like it. Instead, he goes about taking a pure shot of espresso to keep him going. He has just finished swallowing when a customer comes in.

Percy stares. He knows fall is basically on top of them already but it's still barely October and this dude is decked in all black from head to toe, from the sweatpants to the sweater to the cap he's wearing; his shoes are white but it's not nearly enough to create a contrast and he's wearing sunglasses.

He doesn't take them off as he walks right up to Percy, but he's seen weirder shit, so he just musters up his best customer service smile. "Welcome, sir, what can I get you?"

He's looking at the menu instead of looking at him, leaning down, probably because he can barely see from how dark those sunglasses look indoors. "Yeah, that'll be an iced white mocha with vanilla sweet cold foam and caramel drizzle, thank you."

Percy blinks, even as he mechanically punches the order in. Jesus Christ. "It'll be right up, sir. Are you paying in cash or credit?"

"Cash, and add three chocolate muffins to that order, if you don't mind," the guy finally looks up at him, and his mouth drops open. "Holy shit."

"Sir?" Percy asks, turning around to see if there's anything behind him. There isn't. "Everything okay?"

He turns back and blinks at the guy, who's now taken off his sunglasses to reveal a pair of very bright, very pretty blue eyes. He looks vaguely familiar, like maybe Percy's seen him somewhere before, but there's stubble over his jaw and chin and purple bags under his eyes that make him feel like he's actually not seen him at all, ever, in his life.

He clears his throat, smiles, and it's like his whole face transforms—instead of looking tired and ragged, he now seems fashionably tired, the way Percy wishes he could look when he's dealing with his own case of insomnia. It should feel tacky but this guy must be extremely talented at faking smiles or magical, because he feels his cheeks heating.

"Sorry— I just wasn't expecting someone as gorgeous as you to be serving me," the guy chuckles, lowering his gaze to his name tag, only to look at

Percy from underneath his eyelashes. They're pale blond and long, and Percy swallows. "Percy, is it? Lovely name. A tad British."

Percy snorts. Okay. "Sir— no offense, but I'm in the middle of work."

"Oh," he looks around him as if he had forgotten. Percy's only blessing is that Piper seems to have fallen into the ADHD hell of hyperfocusing so she hasn't noticed anything yet. "Right. My apologies, you're just breathtaking. I've never seen eyes that green before."

"Thank you," Percy rolls his eyes, and watches as the guy runs his gaze all over him again, licking his lips. He blushes even further. Ugh, maybe he *does* need to get laid. "Anyways, sir, your total is—"

He holds out a hand and stops him, pulling out his wallet, and then a hundred-dollars bill. Percy stares at it, then up at him, then down at it again. He feels the need to notify him: "Sir, you're overpaying—"

"Just giving you a tip," the guy winks. "Any chance I can get your number so I don't have to feel like shit for flirting with you at work?"

Holy shit, the balls on this guy. Percy can't help but blurt out his disbelief. "Oh my god, are you serious?"

The guy raises his eyebrows. "Is that a no? I'm dead serious."

Percy takes his money and actually counts out his change, handing it over without saying a word, but the guy refuses it. Percy keeps insisting with his eyes. He keeps shaking his head. He insists *again*; the guy takes the money and promptly leaves it in Percy's tip jar. Fuck. Nothing can come out of the tip jar once it's in it.

He *refuses* to answer that question even as he goes about making this guy's absolutely horrible shit ass drink. He lingers at the pick-up counter, watching him work with that stupid magical smile of him, so Percy never asks for his name. Not that he *wants* it.

He slams the coffee cup and the bag with the muffins a little too hard on the counter. He forces a customer service smile. “Thank you for your business, sir.”

The guy hums, nodding. Before Percy’s eyes, he pulls a pen out of his back pocket, writes something on the paper bag with the muffins, opens it to pull out one, and then hands him over the bag, winking.

His voice comes out as a purr. “Thank *you*, Percy. By the way— great taste in music.”

He leaves with his coffee and a single muffin and Percy has never been angrier at a customer in his entire fucking life. He doesn’t have to look to know he’s just been given a phone number. Shit. Fuck.

Piper comes up to him with raised eyebrows and whistles. “Wow, you look like you’re gonna have a heart attack.”

Percy dives into the bag, pulls out a muffin, and bites into it with *fury*. “Don’t talk to me.”

The second time Pretty Asshole (as Percy has dubbed him) comes around, he is again in all black, wearing a cap and sunglasses indoors. The only difference is that his stubble is well-trimmed instead of unkept, the place is packed with customers, and it’s been like two months since he even came around the first time.

They don’t really talk; the place is too busy and he thankfully respects workplace boundaries, but when Percy hands him his drink, he manages to grab a hold of his wrist, pull out his pen, and write his number down on Percy’s skin again.

“I insist,” Pretty Asshole says, smiling at him, which doesn’t have the same effect that it did when his eyes were visible, but still makes his face warm. “Also, you look jaw-dropping with that shirt on.”

He leaves before Percy can take the decision to throw his coffee at him. He's thinking that at least he didn't leave a scandalous tip this time, but then he actually looks at his tip jar and almost screams, because there's no way someone left two fifty-dollars bills in there *willingly*.

Ugh.

The instant Percy recognizes Pretty Asshole as he walks through the front door, words slip from his lips. "You *motherfucker*."

Pretty Asshole raises his eyebrows. "I love you too, darling."

"Oh my god," Percy throws his hands up in the air. "What the hell is your problem?"

"You're awfully cute," Pretty Asshole grins, and Percy tries so, so hard not to stare at his smile but the motherfucker is pretty and knows how to use it to his advantage, leaning against the counter to cut into the space between them. "Are you actually gonna take my order now, love?"

Percy gapes at him in stunned silence for about thirty seconds too long, then furiously looks down at his screen. He barks out the question. "What can I serve you today, *sir*?"

Pretty Asshole whistles. "You can call me sir one more time, please."

"What can I serve you today, jackass?" Percy asks instead, and watches him as he throws his head back for a laugh. He feels his cheeks heating because god, that is an unfairly beautiful sound, but he notices a line forming and decides to move this along. "Order and name, *please*, I don't have all day."

After taking another way-too-sweet order from him and getting *another* unnecessary tip, Percy grabs his cup, a pen, and looks up at him with a tired sigh. "Once more, sir, your name?"

Pretty Asshole hesitates. A lot of people do the first time they order something at a place like this, or just don't like getting their name called,

but this guy is clearly used to taking coffee like this, considering how he knows their menu by heart, and never thinks twice about what he's going to order. Percy stares at him in expectant silence, but nervously glances at the line forming behind him.

"That's, uh," Pretty Asshole starts, and Percy resists the urge to shake him and tell him to spill it out. To his bafflement, he actually leans in, looking wary, even behind those ridiculous sunglasses, to whisper at Percy. "That'd be Apollo, thank you."

Percy snorts, chokes, and has to cover his mouth with his hand to not outright laugh at a customer. "Right. *Sure*. Okay, what's your actual name?"

Not-Apollo pouts. "Why would you react like that?"

"I think people would notice a superstar ordering coffee at a shop in the middle of New York," Percy shrugs, snorts again. Piper is gonna have a field day with this tone. "You do look like him, I guess. But he's on tour in Europe or something, so—"

"You're a fan?" Not-Apollo perks up, and Percy shakes his head. "Aw, shame."

"You're holding up the line, sir," Percy sighs. "Name, please? And a legit one this time?"

Not-Apollo's lips twitch, forming an amused, knowing smile that Percy doesn't understand. "Alright, write me down as Phoebe, then. Is that good enough for you?"

Percy resists the urge to point out that it's a rather old-fashioned lady name that he can't see anyone calling a guy this... good looking. But whatever, he's had to write down enough white people names with ridiculous spellings before, and his mom called him Perseus of all things, so he can't judge.

"Shame you're not making my drink today," Phoebe says, and Percy can tell he just winked underneath his sunglasses. He almost laughs at his face

again. “It always tastes better when it’s you.”

Percy wrinkles his nose. “That’s creepy. Get the fuck out, asshole, I got coffee addicts to take care of.”

Phoebe blows him a kiss as he walks away to his table. *Ugh.*

An hour later, Hazel’s shift ends, and she hands Percy a piece of paper.

“A cute guy left this for you when he picked up his drink,” she says, smiling brightly, unaware that Percy wants to strangle said cute guy. “He seemed eager. But I’ve got a date with Frank, so I gotta run— see you tomorrow!”

As she walks away, Percy looks down at the phone number, and notices yet again that it’s different, but the handwriting is the same.

Fucking weirdo.

This, unfortunately, becomes a regular occurrence.

Every month or so, Pretty Asshole, Not-Apollo, or Phoebe will show up, shamelessly flirt with him, and leave behind a new phone number for him to call. Percy is tired of it but at the same time it breaks up his usual routine, and on the odd chance that he shows up during a slow shift, it provides more entertainment than what he usually has, and keeps him away from brain death during work.

Today, though, his visitor is Thalia Grace, done up in her usual fashionably punk-emo leather jacket, crop top and black eyeliner, leaning against the pick-up counter because Percy’s doing drinks today, and gathering looks and whispers from people because her dad happens to be a big-shot music producer for the likes of Apollo.

She’s the big sister Percy’s never had and never knew he wanted and that he also passionately hates because she makes him do stuff he doesn’t wanna do.

“I need a date,” Thalia says, drumming her nails against the counter and pouting her lips. Percy blinks, unaffected. Thalia groans. “Dude, *come on*, it won’t be that bad. It’s just a little party.”

“It’s a high-profile party,” Percy rolls his eyes. “Pass.”

“Piper can’t go,” Thalia goes on. “Neither can Jason. You *know* I have to bring a plus one or my dad will be on my case, Percy, come on. What’s a favor between friends?”

Percy frowns. “I once broke my arm because of you—”

“You were twelve, get over it,” Thalia laughs, and Percy laughs with her, which is bad because she leans into the nostalgia to trap him, her gaze sharp. “Hey, I’ll owe you one, and... I happen to know when Jason is visiting from Berkeley.”

“I—” Percy bites his lip, torn. Fuck, he’s too easy, too weak for blonde eye candy. He doesn’t even *like* Jason. “I... fuck you.”

Thalia winks at him, victorious, and has a sip of her coffee. “Great to do business with you, Percy.”

Yeah, he is already regretting this.

2. Chapter 2

Notes for the Chapter:

some fluff from my lonely self to u ♥

A tweet:

Fuck L.A.; all the real pretty people are in NYC :)

Apollo sighs as he stares at it, takes another bite of his muffin, and curses his little gay heart. Green eyes, dark hair, that blessed tanned skin like the sun decided that no one else should ever be pretty again. Is love at first sight real? Apollo's always wanted it to be. He thought it was.

So with his silly little heart swelling as he recalls the sharp edge of Percy-the-cute-barista's smile, he takes a picture of his half-drunk coffee, against the backdrop of New York through his car's dark, blinded windshield, and adds it to the tweet.

He sends it. It takes all of a minute for notifications to start flooding his feed, and he rolls his eyes at the obligatory *oh look apollo's found a new bae* tweets that he catches as he blocks his phone.

He considers whether this will backfire, and decides that nah.

Right? Right.

He's on tour rehearsals and Artemis comes to visit, uninvited. With those wide, pale eyes of hers, and the ever-youthful curl to her smirk, she asks: "Who is it this time?"

Apollo aggressively pulls his sound check earbuds out of his ear and considers throwing them at her. "What do you mean?"

Artemis runs a rough hand through her hair. She looks decent enough today, which means she has press to do, because otherwise she wouldn't have bothered.

“You've been making longing cryptic posts for the last three weeks,” Artemis hums, shooting him a look. “So?”

“None of your business,” Apollo pouts. Then he changes subjects. “You're here for a selfie, aren't you?”

Artemis shrugs. “The Olympics are coming up. Gotta remind people I exist. Do you mind?”

“Appearing in a picture with my twin sister?” Apollo pretends to think about it. “Yes. You look awful. You're a danger to my brand and an insult to my ethereal beauty.”

He gets an elbow in the gut for that one.

Later, when he looks at the picture Artemis took, he almost screams at her caption.

With a lovesick idiot. Again. Are we tired yet?

What has he done to deserve this? Other than hog womb space, that is.

So unfair.

One of the many times Apollo visits the coffee shop—in the of a worldwide tour; he might as well abuse his private jet—Percy does his drink and he's smiling, eyes wrinkled at the corners, looking like the best thing that's ever happened to him in his life. The smile is not for him but for a pretty friend of his with eyes like a kaleidoscope that if didn't she scream lesbian and he wasn't totally whipped for the cute barista, he would try to hit on. But it's still beautiful and all he can think about.

He's sleep dazed and jetlagged so his flirting isn't as overt as usual, which means Percy doesn't insult him as much as usual, instead keeping his voice softer, his snark friendly. He's captivated. He leaves his number for him again—a different one; he intends to give Percy all of them—and it gets him the cutest little eye roll. It feels like he just got hit with an arrow to the heart.

Apollo records a short clip of his hands as he hands him over his coffee and he feels like the creepiest piece of shit on earth for it, but it's just— hands. Percy has long fingers, delicate despite the rough aspect of his hands as a whole, the type that he *knows* would do amazing on a piano. He pines like the sad, lonely idiot he is.

Which is why as soon as he gets home he wraps himself up in his coziest comfort blanket, hair curls spilling over his shoulders, half-drunk coffee growing cold as he picks up his guitar and tries, unsuccessfully, to write a song.

“This ain't for the best,” is as far he gets, mumbling his way through stray lines. It's the only one he's any kind of confident in. Yet he keeps trying and eventually moves to his piano, sleep wrapped in a blanket, dragging his coffee with him. He's recording the whole experience, of course, and then someone in his PR can decide what to do with it— a TikTok, probably. People love those. “Can coffee cure loneliness?”

Hm, today's not a creative flow day. “They say the ocean's blue... think it's green instead, I'm about to drown— aquamarine? Ocean blue? I need a thesaurus.”

Apollo actually looks up a thesaurus like the sad idiot he is, but he isn't pleased and ends up dropping his phone on the floor while it's still rerecording. He offers his future adoring fans a charming grin. “Oops.”

A mess. He's a mess. This has been known.

Ugh, he wants more coffee.

The video makes waves. He's at a late night show and the host asks him about it and Apollo instantly wants to die because that was *not* a good day and he can't believe it actually made it past PR.

"So you have a new beau?" The host asks, and Apollo can almost see him drool for the information, the headlines. He plays coy, shrugging, looking away to exchange a look with the audience at home. The host presses. "Come on, we're all dying for a bone here! Who's got the great Apollo all lovesick?"

"No one!" Apollo says, but winks at the cameras. It gets him obligatory laughs and he wonders, vaguely, if the drama of this becoming public would be worth it. His tour is sold out, everyone loved his new album. He's at his peak and he's afraid it'll mean that this is as far as he'll get in regards to music. What's a little more romantic tension to keep eyes on him, if only for a second later? "No new lover, unfortunately. I got myself pinning like an idiot, though, for a completely normal person. Can you believe that?"

The host shakes his eyes and licks his lips. Ah, exclusives are always so sweet. "And how did that happen?"

"Oh, you know. New York, coffee," Apollo shrugs. "I found this awfully cute barista. Eyes like a storm, I'm telling you. Don't think they even realize who I am, and it's all very sad."

Laughter again; Apollo plays up his resulting pout, and the host looks at him like he's already imagining the YouTube views he's gonna get in this two minutes clip of the interview with three ads. "You can't resist a pretty face, can you?"

He wants to seethe. He's seriously dated the great sum of three people in his life. Having one-night stands and the occasional fuck buddy isn't illegal, but Apollo figures it's as good as being a slut when you're famous and don't try to hide your indulgence in beautiful thighs and handsome jawlines.

Besides, if his pining after this cute barista means anything, it's that he's right, so he laughs along with the comment and nods, shrugging. "It's always the eyes that do me in, it's incredible..."

Today, Percy's wearing lip gloss and nail polish, and Apollo leans against the pick-up counter and presses his forehead against the cool surface, pressing his palms together and *begging*.

"You're so, so beautiful," Apollo says. "*Please* give me your number."

"Dude," Percy takes a small cup and pumps two shots of espresso into it. Apollo doesn't raise his head up to look; he can tell by the sounds and this is the one thing he doesn't like about Percy, but he's willing to compromise. "You don't look that hot when you're groveling."

Apollo snaps upwards, smiling. "You think I'm hot?"

Percy laughs and it's beautiful and wonderful; it sounds like a kid's laugh, full of joy, yet sharper. Apollo almost weeps. "Your ugly mug is fine. You gonna order something? Cuz that's over there, not here—"

Apollo grabs his hand and Percy was already blushing but now his face is red enough that Apollo would need the bloodiest red to be able to replicate the shade when he tries painting him from memory again.

"I'm smitten," Apollo whines, begging again. He pulls out a pen from his back pocket and gestures at his skin. Percy's wide doe eyes change from charmed to unimpressed so fast it almost gives him whiplash. "I got another number for you."

"Why the fuck do you have so many of those?" Percy rolls his eyes. "Whatever, dude, fuck off. Rush hour is soon and I need my hand to make coffee, if you didn't know."

Apollo opens the pen and starts drawing stars and flowers around Percy's wrist, then he pulls out another five pens and gets to coloring. Percy's mouth falls open.

"I'm fast," Apollo winks, forgetting about the sunglasses again. "Can I take a picture of this afterwards?"

Percy gapes like a fish, then nods without saying anything. Apollo focuses and when he's done, Percy's whole wrist and part of his forearm covered in his art, he finishes it off by writing another of his numbers in tiny digits, because he knows Percy won't call.

He pockets his pens, takes out his phone and takes a picture. Percy blinks at him, and Apollo just smiles.

“Thank you, gorgeous,” he blows him a kiss. “I’ll see you around.”

This picture, Apollo doesn't upload.

Apollo uploads a picture of the name Percy decided to write on his cup today, *Asshole*, which is probably against the place’s policy in regards to customer service, but the shop was empty today. He still can’t believe that Percy wasn’t able to accept he is *the* Apollo, but the hilarity of it keeps him hooked, and today he had perked up when he saw him walk in, despite immediately acting like he was dirt under his shoe— in a friendly way, that is.

Ah, well. At least he hopes it’s friendly. Percy’s amused smile seems to imply so. He has no illusions of his flirting breaking through any time soon, if ever, but Apollo can dream.

He did a magazine spread and cover for Vogue and it’s blowing up because he looks amazing as always, but he can’t help but focus on the interview portion.

“You once said you consider songs to be like messages in bottles. Is there any bottle out there that you’re hoping reaches someone?”

“Maybe not a bottle— not a song, not yet. But I’m wondering if my favorite barista will realize they’ll likely be the inspiration behind my next album at this rate. Do you people dig lovesick instead of heartbreaking songs for once?”

“Oh, I’d love a happy lovey-dovey track.”

“Too bad, I’m pining like an idiot. It’ll all be gay longing.”

“That’s also really good. Another question, related to this subject, what’s our opinion on your exes’ opinions on their own bottled messages?”

“Hm... they should’ve signed the NDA if they weren’t gonna like them.”

He’s getting mixed reactions for that one, as per usual.

But it’s all good.

Next up: Vanity Fair’s Oscars After-Party. He’s been looking forward to this one. He has a feeling it’s gonna be a special night.

Author's Note:

any thoughts? :D

thanks for reading <3